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FM AMEMBASSY ROME  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9403  
INFO RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA PRIORITY 0533  
RUEHSG/AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO PRIORITY 0277  
RUEHMN/AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO PRIORITY 0070  
RUEHPE/AMEMBASSY LIMA PRIORITY 0383  
RUEHSJ/AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE PRIORITY 0245  
RUEHSN/AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR PRIORITY 0197  
RUEHME/AMEMBASSY MEXICO PRIORITY 0536  
RUEHOT/AMEMBASSY OTTAWA PRIORITY 1776  
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS PRIORITY 0763  
RUEHMIL/AMCONSUL MILAN PRIORITY 9098  
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E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/19/2017  
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [WHA](#) [EU](#) [VE](#) [IT](#)  
SUBJECT: ITALY ON VENEZUELAN CONSTITUTIONAL REFORMS

REF: STATE 154674

Classified By: A/Pol M/C Jonathan Cohen, for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (C) Poloff delivered reftel demarche to MFA South America Office Director Michele Giacomelli November 16. Poloff shared USG concerns about democracy in Venezuela posed by President Chavez's proposed constitutional reforms, and requested that Italy speak out on behalf of democratic rights in Venezuela.

12. (C) Giacomelli said he had been following the constitutional reform closely, and that Italy was concerned about its anti-democratic nature as well as the potential impact on Italian businesses operating in Venezuela. Despite these concerns, Giacomelli questioned the wisdom of speaking out in the lead-up to the referendum, as international criticism would embolden Chavez and possibly work to his advantage. Giacomelli also said that despite the troubling nature of the reforms, Italy considered them an internal Venezuelan matter.  
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